

Go West...

and grow up with the country. John B. L. Soule, 1851

The expansion westward began with the founding of the nation. Of course, “west” at that time meant Ohio. Still, the trend that began long ago remains intact today. When we look at employment growth, the areas showing the strongest growth are located in the West and South.

Data from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program confirms this fact. The average annual rate of job growth, from January 1940 to September 2007, was strongest in the South and West. Nationally, over this nearly 68-year period, jobs expanded at an average annual rate of 2.2 percent. The most robust growth was in Nevada at 4.9 percent and Arizona at 4.3 percent. Only two other states exceeded 3 percent in average annual growth—Florida and Alaska.

The question is, what factors drove the jobs to the West and South? Certainly, there are multiple factors, but among the more prominent are climate, demographics, and the growth of service-based industries.

Anyone who has spent a winter in Buffalo knows it is cold and harsh. The movement to warmer climates became a natural draw for people. As they migrated to warmer climates they brought with them businesses and jobs. Making this change easier was the transformation from an economy based primarily on agriculture and heavy manufacturing to a more service-based economy. Service-based businesses found these warmer areas well suited to their needs. Technological

change also played a major role, replacing labor while at the same time increasing output. This resulted in more capital investments for new business ventures in these areas.

Demographics also impacted the movement of jobs to the West and South. The populations in these areas have traditionally grown faster and are younger than their northern counterparts. This provided the skilled labor pool necessary for business expansion. These areas also adapted more quickly to the changing nature of the nation's industrial mix.

The forces mentioned above are still at work. They bode particularly well for the mountain states. This area currently enjoys the strongest rate of employment growth in the nation. While the trends will continue, there will also be new challenges as global economic growth changes the expansion of business and employment opportunities. ⓘ

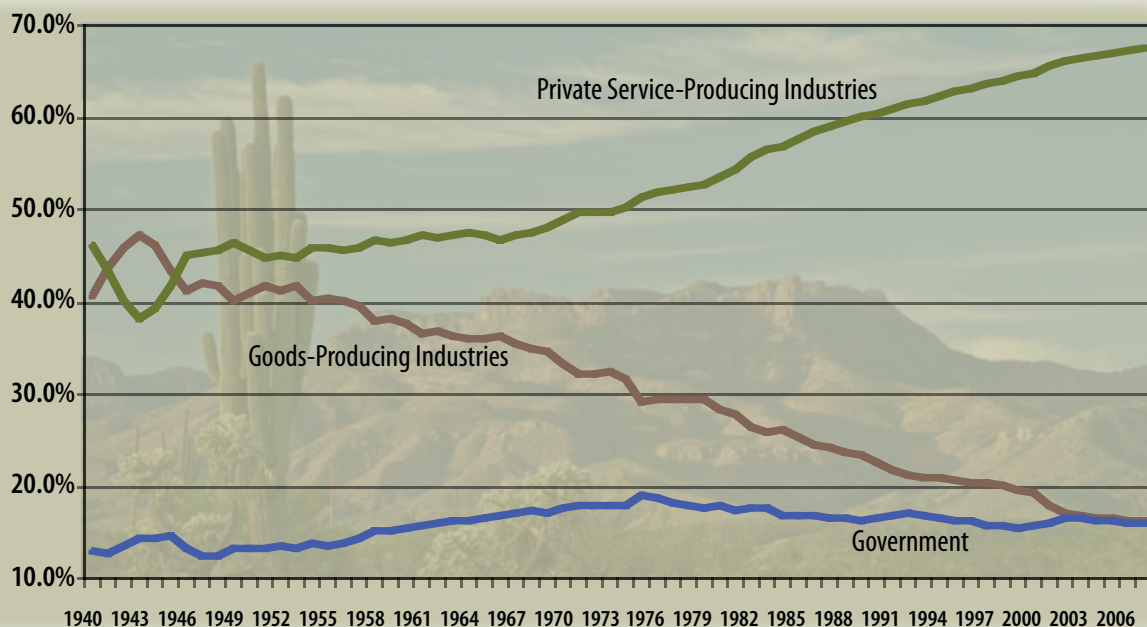
For more information see the following links:

- <http://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/wi/utalmis/gotoCounties.do>
- <http://www.bls.gov/ces/home.htm>
- <http://www.bls.gov/sae/home.htm>

For additional Maps on Average Annual Employment Growth by Decade click here:

- <http://jobs.utah.gov/opencms/wi/pubs/trendlines/janfeb08/jobsbydecade.ppt>

U.S. Employment Distribution
as a Percent of Total Employment by Industry Sector, 1940-2007*

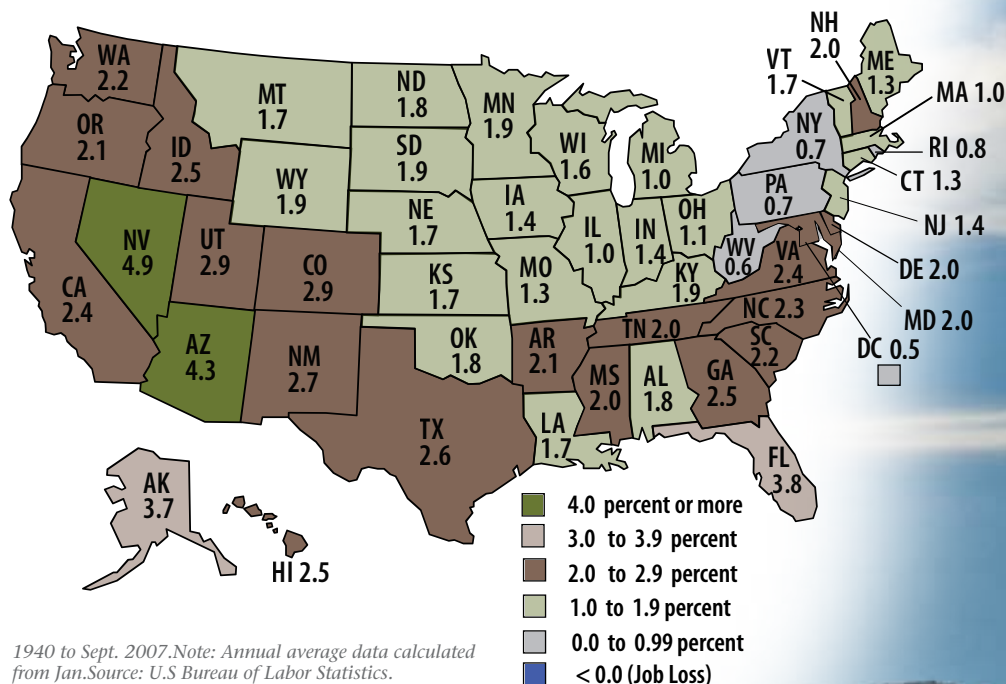


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Note: 2007 data is annual average employment through Sept. 2007.

Average Annual Rate of *Year-Over Employment Growth*

by Census Regions: 1940–2007

U.S. Rate = 2.2%



1940 to Sept. 2007. Note: Annual average data calculated from Jan. Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Employment growth is strongest in the West and in the South.